MARCO NEWSLETTER

Official Publication of the Medical Amateur Radio Council, Limited.

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NET SCHEDULE CHANGES ANNOUNCED

Efforts by the Vice-Presidents of Communication, Ed Ludin, K2UK, and Bob Nevins, KF1J, to find times and locations for the MARCO nets that will increase participation by our members, has resulted in a number of changes.

The most important change is the frequency for the evening 75 meter net. This operation has been plagued by the inability to move a few kilocycles down due to the closeness of the Century Club net on 3.903, and the crowded band conditions when attempts are made to move up frequency. These problems, coupled with a group of Atlanta Georgia hams who regularly meet with a group from the Bahamas on the advertised MARCO frequency of 3.906 mHz. This QSO always starts prior to the time when MARCO is scheduled to begin, and it repeatedly runs until half past the hour. So a search for a better spot to conduct the MARCO net on 75 Meters resulted in a suggestion of 3.868 mHz. This is in the portion of the band that General class amateurs were given permission to use a couple of years ago, and did not appear to be too heavily populated with regular group usage. The frequency was monitored for some time to determine that there were not any regular groups using it. On a couple of evenings the MARCO net was moved to that frequency for test purposes. It was decided by the committee on communications to move this net to this frequency (3.868 mHz) at a date after the next Newsletter is published. Remember to look 5 kc's up and down from 3.868 when looking for the net. The move to this new frequency, as well as other net changes, will take place on November 15.

Another listed net has been moved from one band to another. The net that has been listed for some time a a 40 meter twice weekly operation to watch the propagation of that band is being abandoned. Co-hosted by Ed Briner,

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SPRAGUE'S EARTHQUAKE EXPERIENCES

by
William L. Sprague, M D, WA6CRN

I've been trying to find time to write this piece for the last ten days but it's been a matter of trying to put our lives back together in this time period. Never before, and I've heard others from this area say it also, have our lives been so disrupted by an act of nature as this particular earthquake. I've been through hurricanes, seen tornadoes from a distance, been lost at sea in the middle of a storm for four days and I've been rolled by other California earthquakes which have been little more than curiosities when they've occurred - Tehachapee, Coalinga, Sylmar, ect. Now I appreciate the Hell that those people must have gone through, and I appreciate how lucky Nancy and I were to come out of this with property damage only, and our bodies intact.

It was Thursday morning, October 1st, at 7:42 AM. Nancy and I were sitting at the breakfast table in the kitchen, and I was within ten minutes of leaving for the hospital. There was a sudden sharp jolt and for the next 30 seconds it was compact terror, living from second to second expecting the house to collapse in the next second. We have a two story frame and stucco house. Every stud and every window rattled in synchrony and it was deafening. All the cabinet doors opened - jars and glasses flew out of the cabinets and hit the opposite walls before before splintering on the floor. The breakfront also flew open and there went the good crystal and much of the china. The quake, which we really did live one second at a time, finally did come to an end after an eternity. The plaster was cracked in every room in the house. There was broken glass on the floor of every room. the chimney had seperated from the northeast wall and the top of the chimney was about two inches from the roof.

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MARCO SPECIAL INTEREST COLUMN.

Nothing received this month

PAST-PRES CHRIS SUFFERS POST SURGICAL INFECTION

Dr. Christine Haycock, WB2YBA, Past-President of the Medical Amateur Radio Council, Ltd, underwent intestinal surgery in early August, only to be the victim of a post-surgical infection, which seriously delayed her recuperation, and for a period of time seriously threatened her life. She spent over seven weeks in the hospital as a result of the infection.

When admitted for the operation, Christine never in her wildest imagination expected to be in the hospital longer than two weeks for what she expected to be routine surgery. And even now, she faces another surgical procedure as a result of the complications.

Quoting from a letter from Chris, " It has been quite an experience for me. There were days when I was so sick I never thought I would make it and didn't care. At times I hallucinated due to a very high fever. It was very frightening. I will better understand what my patients are going through. I have had a lot of surgery before, but nothing that was life threatening. It has made me rethink a lot about values in my life."

She tells us that the future surgery will probably not be done until December or January, after she has had time to build her strength back up.

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ROB'S THOUGHTS ON THE STATE OF THE BANDS

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A dissertation on the condition of the various MARCO bands and their success/failure ratio was recently dealt with in a packet message that was distributed among the MARCO packeteers from Dr. Robin Staebler, KEØFD. His reflections on the condition of the various MARCO nets was so vitally important to the organization, that we are reproducing them for all to read, and consider. If any of you have any input on these matters, send them along to the Newlsetter office.

"At a recent Medical Amateur Radio Council net gathering on a Sunday evening, I was asked by Dr. Ira Wexler to put together some thoughts on net times, frequencies and utilization. At the present time the utilization of our multitude of nets has been sporatic to say the least and limited participants in the immediate geographical area of the East coast. I suspect that some of our difficulty has arisen from the occupation of the frequencies by two rather well-organized groups: The 3905 Century Club and a group of W4's who occupy 3.906 MHz approximately 30 minutes before we do in the evening. At the present time in the evenings 75 Meters seems to be the only option that we have available insomuch as 40 Meters is still not a practical frequency for use. However, with winter coming I think that 40 Meters nets should be persisted with on Wednesday and Sunday evenings.

The major activity on the weekends appears to center on 20 Meters which have been very difficult to work and poorly attended. I feel that the frequency that we have not been utilizing during the day and which offers excellent propagation to at least 50 to 60 percent of the country is 40 Meters. I think that a morning net on 40 Meters for Grand Rounds could enlist check-ins for a good portion of the country extending well into the West. The time for Sunday morning Grand rounds should be moved to 1100 E.S.T. or 1400 Zulu for the purpose of establishing and maintaining of the frequency on 40 Meters on Sunday mornings. Additionally, we are not currently utilizing 10 or 15 Meters for DX on Sunday afternoon and I think that an activity on 10 or 15 Meters should be established rather rapidly to place us well in position for the peak of the sunspot cycle when it occurs over the next few years.

At the present time our digital modalities on high frequency have been limited to 75 Meters at night which is completely unsatisfactory. W3HEF wants to try 20 Meters on Wednesday night and I'm certainly willing to assist him in this effort. Unfortunately, I think we will have gained considerably due to the nature of propagation in the evening on 20 Meters. Realistically the digital mode should be moved to a daytime frequency again on a band that would offer the most propagation to our membership here in the United States and again I would strongly recommend trying to establish 40 Meters on a more practical basis. The Packet VHF/NETROM seems to be gathering rapid momentum and we are establishing good distribution of information such as this piece of information to our membership. I would strongly urge us to continue to push for and distribute information on MARCO via the Packet mode, and save voice communications for social and professional dialogue.

If anyone has any suggestions and would be willing to serve as net control for a Sunday morning warmup session which might start at 0900 E.S.T. on 40 Meters as a Catchall net which hopefully we could call Curiosity Rounds and present humerous, or anecdotal cases as a warmup to the later Grand Rounds.

These are my suggestions. I pass them along to the Packeteer's of MARCO for your information and purusal.

73, cul Robin KEØFD"

TO: WA3TVG @ W2XO
W3HEF @ WA3PXX
K2UK @ WB2MNF
N3DBS @ W3IWI
N2GEE @ N2MH-4
KJ9L @ KJ9L
WB2YBA @ WA2SNA-1
WB5D @ KF5IZ
N4DR @ K4NGC

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MARCO MEMBER, WHERE ARE YOU?

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The "Ham band" active MARCO members, those of you who take the time to check into one or more of the various nets conducted by the organization now and then, have no doubt wondered where many of you have disappeared to. Over the past decade or two, many members have been active on the air, and then suddenly, have disappeared. How about some news from you !!!

One of the most noticeable absences is that of Walter Thain, WB4KKB, Walt used to eat and sleep MARCO. He was very active on the air, especially 20 meters. Walt was the only MARCO member to have visited Guyana and the operation of Jim Jones of the now infamous Peoples Temple. There has been no news from Walt for years. Anybody have any news regarding Walt, please send it to the Newsletter Office.

Another of the active MARCO members who we have lost contact with is Past-President Dr. Donald Needham, W6JNM. Don has not been on the air for years. Let's join in on 20 meters Don, and get reacquainted with MARCO.

And how about you, Past-President Dr Charlie Jordan, K4IEP? Where have you been? We used to enjoy hearing your melodious voice on the air, but have not heard anything from you in years.

Where is that long time MARCO member from Amarillo, Dr. Fred Faust, K5ZPN? Fred, your long-time friends in MARCO want to hear from you.

Another Texan that we've missed a lot lately is Dr. Merv Grossman K5CY. Merv hosted MARCO there in Dallas three times (a record). At one time he was net control on 20 meters, then Merv was lost on the air. We miss you Merv - how about coming back on the air with us?

Along with Merv, there are a number of others from big "D" that we sorely miss. Tiger, WB5MRB, we miss you! Byron, W5IBE, we miss you! Carl, W5SXU, we miss you!

There's all so many others who used to get on the nets, but have fallen along the way. Jack, N2BOI; Ernie, N2CDK; Dick, KA2K; Henry, W2MVT; Irv & Saul, WB3FGE & WB3FGM; John, K3MD; another past-president Anson, K4EK; Polycarp, WB4LPC; John KC5UT; Warren, NE4Z; Jeff, N5EQ; Ed & Sandy, WA5OUO & WB5RRR; Haven, KB5XH; John, NO6D; Carl, N8APD; Sr Ethel, WB8GWE; Bob, W8YD; Mike, K9AJ; Past-pres Don, KJ9B; Bill, N8TPD; Don, KØIND; John, KDØLO; Bill, WBØPQZ; & Marty, KØRQF, to name some of you.

Band conditions have improved immensely the past few months, and winter is coming. How about dusting off the HF rig, and joining in the nets these cold, dark evenings, or the snowy Sundays that are due to occur the next few months. See you on the air!!!

MEMBERSHIP INQUIRIES...
Direct all inquiries, and all applications for membership in the MEDICAL AMATEUR RADIO COUNCIL, LTD., to the Secretary;

Dr. William L. Sprague, WA6CRN
433 North 4th St.,
Montebello, CA., 90640

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BLURPS FROM THE EDITOR
by wa3tvg

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It is our sad duty to report the passing of two more of our elder statesmen. Dr W. Foster Montgomery, WA3VGZ, passed away on August 25, 1987, after a bout with pneumonia. He had not been to active in ham radio the latter years of his life, living in the Watergate towers where antenna erection is next to impossible. Those in MARCO had our last opportunity to enjoy his company when he attended the banquet at the last Dallas convention in the summer of 1983.

Dr. Milton B. Stucheli, N8CKR, died September 21, 1987 at his home in Troy, Michigan. He was former chief of radiology in the Beaumont Hospitals at Royal Oak and Troy Michigan (Thanks to Joe Boris and Dick Wetzel for the information.)

Those of you who wondered where WB3AJC and KA3CEO disappeared to since retirement forced them to the shores of the Chesapeake, will be glad to know that they are well. A dream of theirs since moving to the shore became a reality recently, when they purchased a boat. The BOAT is a 32 foot Grand Banks Trawler. Based at the Tolchester Marina, which is about ten miles rom their Worton, Maryland home, it has kept them both busy, what with U.S. Power Squadron and U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary course. Dick promises to be operating Maritime Mobile when he gets it all together.

It's sure good to hear Dick Wetzel, W8KNT on the air again. He recently became the proud owner of a new Kenwood 440. We are sorry to report that his beloved Tigers were unsuccessful candidates for a position as participant in the 1987 World series. And in all seriousness, congratulations on being one of only seven physicians in the country to be elected this year to Fellowship status in the American College of Nuclear Medicine.

Those of you who regularly check into the 75 meter net will no doubt be aware of the medical news from Reading PA, and Fairfield, CT. But the rest of you who do not actively participate will be alarmed to hear of the malaria epidemic in Central Pennsylvania, and the epidemic of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever in Connecticut.

Those MARCO members who subscribe to 73's Magazine were treated to an article, in the November issue, on the DX trip to Revillagigedo that was made this past February by a group of hams that included our own Mike McGirr, M.D., K9AJ. (Those of us who were at this years annual meeting in Chicago were thrilled to see Mike's slide presentation. and hear him describe this trip.) If you weren't at the Chicago meeting, read the article in 73's.

Several requests for information regarding MARCO membership continue to come into Box 73's, Acme PA each week. The decision to advertise in all of the popular ham radio publications was made at the annual meeting in Chicago, after results of a limited advertising campaign in 1986 was reported on by yours truly. There has been no updated list of new members from the secretary since the earthquake, but from the reports we hear on the air, a goodly number of those who write are serious about membership and are participating in the nets. If you old members hear any of these new guys or gals on the air, extend to them a welcome, and make them feel that we are glad to have them aboard.

On the same subject, those of you who have just "come aboard" are sincerely asked to tune up and participate in any or all of the MARCO nets. Don't be bashful - we all were new members once upon a time. Get involved - we need you!!

The MARCO members from the 1st call area will be receiving an insert from Joe Boris with this issue of the MARCO Newsletter. Mr. Boris is rumored to have a new publication about to go to press, the subject of which I hear is a history of MARCO. For those of you who are not familiar with the name, Joe Boris was one of the driving forces in MARCO during its first decade. From the inception of the organization in 1966, he served as Executive Director and Editor of the official MARCO publication. He has been retired for virtually ages but continues to put together a Newsletter which is sent to friends and acquaintances in the Northeast.

Innumerable queries have been sent this direction via packet and the HF MARCO nets regarding the status of MARCO's annual meeting next year in Dayton. I wrote to the Dayton Amateur Radio Association (DARA) immediately after the decision to go to Dayton next year was made. A request to guide us (MARCO) to a hotel or motel who would have the facilities available was made. There was no response to that letter for sometime, so I then wrote to the Convention Bureau of the city, and to the Raddisson hotel, successor to the Imperial House, which was the site of two previous MARCO annual meetings. Almost immediately a phone call was received from the Raddisson, with a very cooperative Sales Manager indicating that they would like very much to have MARCO every other year in their facility. (MARCO, at the annual meeting in Long Beach had decided to meet at the site of the world's biggest Hamfest every other year.) This call from the hotel was followed a few days by a letter from the convention bureau indicating that they were looking for a hotel that would accept us and our space requests during the busiest time of the year for the city. At this writing, nothing has been resolved, but it looks like the Raddisson will "find" thirty or thirty-five rooms for us, and the necessary meeting and eating rooms. Anyway, block the dates off on your calender. The meetings will take place April 29, 30, and May 1, 1988 even if we have to go to Cincinnati or Findlay to get hotel rooms. If you've never been to the Dayton Hamfest, make it a point to attend next year; if you've been there before, you know what it's about.

----------MARCO NET SCHEDULE----------

TIME - UTC	TIME - EST	DAYS	FREQ	NOTES
0200	9:00 P.M.	Mon,Tues,Thur,Fri	3.868	Regular 75 Meter Net
0400	11:00 P.M.	Sunday	3.906	Late-night 75 Meter Net
1300	8:00 A.M.	Monday	3.929	Breakfast with MARCO
2000	4:00 P.M.	Sunday	14.280	Sunday Afternoon Net,looking for DX members
1515	10:15 A.M.	Sunday	14.308	Medical Grand Rounds of the Air
0200	9:00 P.M.	Sunday & Wednesday	14.280	K6KK & WA3TVG net contols
0300	10:00 P.M.	Wednesday	3.6065	RTTY Net - W3HEF & N4GXP/8 net controls
0315	10:15 P.M.	Wednesday	14.110	RTTY moves here if no success on 75 meters
1700	12:00 Noon	Saturday	28.350	Net Control K2TNY: New net: Come on Novices

----------MARCO NET SCHEDULE----------

The following article is another of the Antenna Workshop Series, that was presented on the 40 meters Sunday evening nets from May, 1981 to July, 1983, by the late John Haerle, WB5IIR. This paper was read on December 12, 1982.

FROM B C TO COAX

As I mentioned last week, there have been a number of requests for a talk on transmissions lines and, although I covered coax and connectors at some length last year, this discussion will start back in "B C", or "Before Coax", and show comparative characteristics, along with advantages and disadvantages of different types of feedline, both parallel conductor types and coaxial lines.

As I have said before, although the basic idea of coax originated many years ago, the materials and techniques needed to produce relatively efficient coaxial cable were not developed before World War II, so the transmission lines used by hams back there in B C were fashioned of wire. The forerunner of coax was a parallel-conductor line, with the two wires separated basically by air. This kind of line was very effective since there was virtually no loss as long as the wire was heavy enough and the separation was sufficient to prevent the formation of corona discharge between the conductors. The two wires were supported at regularly spaced distances along the line by insulating rods, or spacers. All kinds of materials were pressed into service as spacers, polystyrene, porcelain, bakelite, wax impregnated wood, etcetera. The spacers varied from less than 2, to 6 inches or more. The wider spacing was very effective at lower HF frequencies, but it was discovered that closer spacing resulted in minimal line radiation, especially at the higher frequencies. Back in the good old days, open wire line was made of #14, #12, or sometimes even #10 wire and the characteristic impedance was from 500 to 600 ohms, although prefabricated lines of 300 and 450 ohms have pretty much superceded the older, larger, home-made types. The most popular kinds sold now, principally for television receiving applications, are available in tow forms for the 450 ohm version:

1. The bare wire type. This consists of a pair of #18 wires separated by low-loss polysterene rods, fastened at relatively small distances apart, to maintain stable spacing between the conductors. As you know, the formula for the characteristic impedance of an air insulated parallel conductor is:

$Z_o = 276 \log 2s/d$,

where s = the center to center distance between the conductors, and d = the outer diameter of the conductors. However, the bare 450 ohm line will exhibit an impedance somewhat lower than would be indicated by the formula, because the spacers are quite close together, thus making the average dielectric constant lower than pure air. However, attentuation is still very low and this line is quite satisfactory for amateur transmitting applications.

2. The second version of the prefabricated 450 ohm "ladder line", as it is called, is made by the same company, Saxton, but it is insulated. It looks like flat 300 ohm TV ribbon with, however, three differences:

a. It is about one inch wide.

b. The conductors are the same as in the bare type, #18 solid conductor, but plastic coated.

c. Rectangular holes, approximately 1 1/4 by 5/8 inches are punched out of the center dielectric, at a spacing of six holes pre foot, leaving polyethylene coated conductors with moulded spacers, also leaving an appreciable amount of air separating the conductors, and the entire assembly is completely protected from moisture.

While there is, understandably, a little more loss than with the bare wire, it is much more efficient than solid dielectric twin-lead. Additionally, a light nylon cord threaded in and out of the holes in the line can serve as a messenger cable to support the line, allowing it to survive quite nicely the effects of ice and/or high winds. Furthermore, where rain and ice may very well shut you down when using bare wire parallel conductor line, this plastic coated type will keep you in business. The line impedance may change a bit, but not enough to keep your transmatch from handling the situation. Furthermore, the complete insulation of the wire prevents problems from corona in most all cases.

I have used all of these types of parallel conductor feedlines, and I find that you give up very little in return for the advantages, which are:

1. Lightweight.
2. Strength.
3. Still low loss, about 15% of the attenuation loss with RG8, under equal conditions.
4. No twisting and shorting of conductors, as with bare twin lead.
5. Works well in adverse weather conditions.
6. Velocity factor is relatively high, about .9.

Incidentally, we generally worry too much about velocity factor. In most HF ham applications it is academic and even where it is important, such as in the design of matching stubs or phasing lines, all we need to know is what the velocity factor is, and we can readily fit our design to that parameter.

And let's not forget 300 ohm TV twin lead. A good grade of this kind of line will still do essentially the same job performed by 450 ohm line, without too much more loss. Naturally the more polyethylene dielectric used instead of air dielectric, the more power lost in dielectric heating. Incidentally, since the plastic twin-lead is not shielded, part of the field existing between the conductors is outside the conductors. As a result, dirt on the outside of the ribbon can combine with moisture to change the characteristic impedance more than usual. This effect can be minimized by giving the line a thin coat of silicone grease or automobile wax, and that also makes the line last a lot longer.

Next, let's look at coax: Although there is a tremendous number of types, sixes, dielectric materials, etc., I will cover the several main types used by most hams. First, the common sizes, starting with the smallest, are:

RG58/U, 50 ohms; outside diameter, .195"; velocity factor, 66%; maximum RMS voltage, 1900; dielectric, solid polyethylene. The same type with foam dielectric has a velocity factor of 79% and maximum RMS voltage of 600 volts.

RG8/U, 50 ohms; outside diameter, .405"; velocity factor, 66%; maximum voltage 4000; dieletric, solid polyethylene. The same type with foam has a velocity factor of 80% and maximum voltage is 1500.

RG59/U is 75 ohms; outside diameter, .242"; velocity factor, 66%; maximum voltage, 2300; dieletric, polyethylene. This type, with foam, has a velocity factor of 79%; maximum voltage, 800.

RG11/U is 75 ohms; outside diameter .405"; velocity factor, 66%; maximum RMS voltage, 4000; dieletric, solid polyethylene. This one, with foam dielectric, has a velocity factor of 80% and maximum RMS voltage is 1600.

For frequencies above the HF bands, there is 1/2 inch, 3/4 amd 7/8 inch hardline, with foam dieletric and solid outer shield of aluminum or copper. Losses are much lower than for coax normally used on HF, but hardline, as well as the special connectors used is much, much more expensive, and not justified for HF.

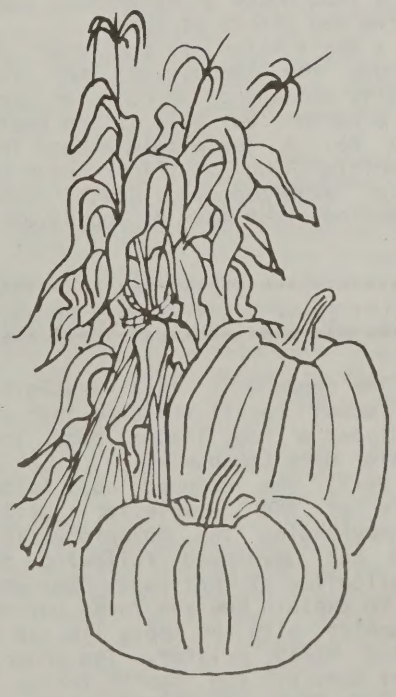
There are two types of Coax commonly used on HF which should be mentioned:

1. RG8X, which is not listed in most of the Handbooks, is the same physical size as RG59, but has an impedance of 50 ohms, and will handle considerably more power, with less loss, than RG58. It usually comes in foam. The specifications seem to vary somewhat from manufacturer to manufacturer, so ask the supplier to be specific on his parerticular brand.
2. RG213/U has become one of the most popular coaxial lines used today. It is 50 ohms, the same diameter as RG8, and is essentiallly RG8 made to better specifications. For example, shielding is better, with the outer braid providing at least 95% shielding. Equally important, the outer jacket is of the non contaminating type, giving you a line that will last 20 years. This is an important characteristic since, for example, one of the most popular RG8 foam lines can become contaminated from the sun's heat in 5 years. Incidentally, RG213's dielectric is solid polyethylene, which allows the inner conductor to stay more nearly centered when stressed by sharp bends and high heat conditions.

This gives you a rather quick description of each of the transmission lines types used by most of the hams. Your particular requirements will determine which is best for you. There is often a tendency to be strongly prejudiced, either in favor of twinlead, or in favor of coax. The coax generation seems to consider mainly the convenience of coax and looks upon the fellow who uses open wire as an old-timer who just hasn't caught up with modern techniques. On the other hand, the old-timer who uses only open wire feed looks upon the user of coax as one of those young appliance operators who only knows how to hook a piece of coax to a resonant antenna.

Of course, both are wrong. There is a most appropriate application for each of these types of line. There are many factors involved. First, it makes complete sense to use coax and a balun for either a 20/15/10 meter triband beam or a monoband beam. In these cases, the impedance excursions are limited, resulting in minimal line attentuation losses, even with coax, so why not do it the simplest, most practical way? Furthermore, the shielded coax and balun preserve the integrity of the sharp beam pattern.

Again, for a dipole used on a single band, it just isn't worthwhile using anything but coax. It's simpler and cheaper. Incidentally, if the dipole is for 40 or 80 meters, don't bother with a balun, either. In these cases, the radiation pattern is so poorly defined that there isn't much need to preserve its integrity, and, if you run much power, ferrite core saturation may lose some of it for you. On the other hand, if you would like to put up an 80 meter dipole and use it to work 40, 20, 15, and 10 meters too, then twin lead of some kind and a transmatch are very much in order. Or, if you wish to feed a tower, or some unorthodox antenna which exhibits a complex impedance far away from 50 ohms, then perhaps low loss line and a transmatch will allow you to sit in a nice warm room and tune that antenna perfectly without having to go out and readjust capacitors and coils each time you want to change frequency. The former is, of course, what I call "The Easy Way," but the point is that you must sit down and ask yourself just what you need. If there is no way to feed your antenna without burying the feedline, generally speaking, your choice must be coax. If your shack is at one end of the house and the antenna at the other, it looks like a job for coax, although, if you can run the feedline around the house, under the eaves, or through the basement, don't overlook these options. Don't forget that open wire can be, say, four times as long, with still less loss than the coax.



The way to make a fortune is to come up with something that's low-priced, habit-forming and tax-deductible.

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AN INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP BEGINS WHEN MARCO MEMBERS VE3CZL and ZL4PD MEET

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(Editors Note) After a 20 Meter contact with Dr. David Lorenzen, VE3CZL, St. Catherines, Ontario, recently, he was reminded of a story which all the members of MARCO would enjoy, and was prodded into putting it into writing. Here is the story, as described by Dave.

"In the late winter of 1986, my daughter Susan was planning on a trip to New Zealand on a University work permit during the University summer holiday in Canada. Neither she nor I knew anyone in New Zealand, so I looked up the names in the MARCO registry, finding the name of Dr. Keith Neill, ZL4PD in Dunedin. I wrote Keith a letter, asking his help if Susan should run into difficulty during her four month stay in New Zealand. I received a letter back from Keith, several weeks later, which expressed his amazement at the co-incidence on receiving my letter. Apparently Keith and his wife Jean were planning on leaving shortly after Susan would arrive in New Zealand, on an extended holiday to North America, England and the Continent. They intended to have a stopover in Toronto with a side trip to Niagara Falls with the express purpose of seeing the Falls, never having been there before and knowing no one in Canada either.

This started a series of contacts on 20 Meters, largely through the efforts of another MARCO member, G3TMN, Dr Ted Newland, in York, England. I had been talking to Ted after the Sunday MARCO DX net, and mentioned the letter from Keith, and by co-incidence, Ted had been talking to him, on the air, about two weeks previously. He apparently had a sked with Keith in another week or two and he promised to relay my concerns and desires to set up a sked with Keith. This was done but because of band conditions and time differences and work commitments, Keith and I had a great deal of difficulty actually setting up a sked but were able to relay information through Ted, G3TMN, who in turn, in the best tradition of Amateur Radio, relayed times and frequencies and information through other hams in the Niagara area and in New Zealand.

Eventually, Keith and I did get together on the air and firmed things up. Keith and Jean had planned on staying in Toronto, and taking a commercial bus tour to Niagara Falls. This was cancelled

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SPRAGUE'S EARTHQUAKE EXPERIENCES

(Continued from Page 1)

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Fortunately the chimney was reinforced with steel rods as has been the law since 1948. For the next five minutes we just sat there at the table, stunned by the experience. They say that one should get under a table or in a doorway during a quake. We couldn't move - everything was moving around us too fast to even stand, for fear of ending up on our ears. I did a quick survey of the damage just to be that there wasn't something that had to be done at that moment. The house and the floor was a mess, but other than sweeping up the floor, there was nothing more to be done. So I headed for the Hospital in Montebello.

On the way there it was obvious that the damage was widespread. Uptown Whittier - the business district - was nearly completely destroyed. The oldest part of the city that is highest and against the Hills showed the worst damage. Almost every house in a twenty or so block of the city was shaken off its foundations (almost all of these to be condemned by the city in the next week). There were a couple of broken water mains but astoundingly all of the utilities remained intact. There are three bridges on the way to the hospital and all were fortunately still up. At the hospital, which was on the other side of the earthquake fault, most everything was in one piece. There was a pretty severe jolt, but not of the magnitude that Whittier suffered. The emergency room was jammed and about fifty people were already lined up outside. Most of the injuried were to the feet, ankles and other parts below the knees. Many fractures by slips and impacts by the upward jars of the quake, and many cuts from broken glass. there were a few coronaries, several of whom did not survive. In this area we were fortunate also: there was almost no loss of life. By the end of the day the emergency room was emptied. The ER's in the two Whittier hospitals were active to about the same degree as ours. The top floor of one of the hospitals in Whittier had to be evacuated because because of a gas leak, but the patients were back in by evening.

With the help of one of my sons, most of the glass damage was cleaned up during the day. On Sunday morning, October 4th, at 3:59 AM, there was another jolt - about ten seconds long, of 5.5 magnitude. For a few seconds we thought it was a repeat performance and felt sure that the house would come down. It stopped short of that, but through most of Whittier there was as much or more destruction than caused by the first quake. The first big shock loosened things up and the Sunday aftershock tumbled down all that loose wall and chimney.

Right now uptown Whittier is being demolished, to be rebuilt some day. Many homes will have to be torn down to start over again. At least half of the houses in the city have suffered damage to a greater or lesser extent. What you've seen in newspaper pictures can't come close to depicting the mess this city has become. It'll take years to rebuild it. Many of the old landmarks are no more.

The real damage may be to the mind. Psychiatrists and psychologists are being recruited to give free services for the many who need it. We have been told by the seismologists that this quake has not relieved the San Andreas Fault pressure one little bit and we are still waiting for the real big one to hit someday in the future. Having lived through a terrifying 6.1 earthquake, we can't imagine what a 8+ magnitude quake might do. Nancy jumps out of her skin every time the front door slams shut. Half of the city nearly faints with each loud noise or aftershock, and we've had plenty of them.

I don't think I can ever get across the impression that this thirty seconds of horror can have on a person, but this is the best I can do. A few people around this "Pacific Ring of Fire" have had this experience. Count your blessings that most of you haven't.

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A LETTER FROM SISTER MARY EMMANUEL

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The readers of this Newsletter no doubt recall the page that was included a few issues back from Sister Mary Emmanuel.

Well, she dropped us a letter here at the Newsletter office acknowledging the notoriety that she had developed following the publication of that page. She went on to explain how she turns out her graphics with the Apple IIe and an Epson MX-80 printer. The program that does all the "smart" things is called "The Newsroom" and is published by Springboard, Inc. Seems this company too has heard of what she was doing with the software, and have called her to ask her to become a Beta Customer. In this category, they will send her some of their software programs before they are offered to the general public, to see what she thinks of them and to find any last minute bugs.

A cute story that she included in her letter has to be shared with all of the folks in MARCO. She writes: At the Convent where she is cloistered, a group of third graders from Lufkin, Texas were recently visitors. They came to the Monastery on a field trip and a few days later we got a letter from their teacher. This is what it said:

On April 29th our class took a trip to Lufkin to visit the Sisters at the Monastery of the Infant Jesus. The class really enjoyed the trip and they learned many things. Here are a few of the things they remembered:

1. The nun's can't show you their whole monastery. They showed a slide show. 2. They do outside chores and inside chores. 3. They have two recess times. 4. Their dog died. 5. They get gold rings when they join the nun family. 6. They can ride bikes. 7. They go fishing. 8. There's a nun who is ninety-four. 9. The nuns get a party when they turn eighty. 10. They sing alot; they read alot. 11. They make hosts. 12. They can have pets. 13. They have pear parties. 14. They make rosaries. 15. They have to get up in the middle of the night to pray. 16. Someone reads to them while they eat. 17. They are separated from the world in a special way. 18. They can't talk all day until after supper. 19. One nun was blind. 20. One nun was from Cuba. 21. The youngest nun was twenty-two. 22. The nuns were Dominicans. 23. The chapel was very, very beautiful. 24. Outside the nuns have a bridge, a dock, fish, flowers, a blackberry patch, a tractor and trees. 25. The nuns are very, very nice. 26. They pray for the outside world.

Sister added, "Isn't that a scream?"

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NET SCHEDULE CHANGES ANNOUNCED
(Continued from Page 1)
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Co-hosted by Ed Briner, WA3TVG, and Harold Gilbert, K6KK, the 40 meter net has shown the very poorest of results. Whenever Harold and Ed would be able to contact each other it would only be the poorest on results. Very few other MARCO stations participated other than the two mentioned and Don, K2TNY. On a couple of occasions Ed and Harold would move to 20 meters when results on 40 meters was very poor. their results were so very good on that band, that they decided to have the Wednesday and Sunday evening nets at 0200 (9:00 P.M. EST) switched the 20 meter band. This move to 14.280 will also take place November 15th. Effectively immediately there will be no further net operation on 40 meters until no further notice.

A completely new MARCO net has been scheduled for the section of 10 meters where the novices have been given phone privileges. This new net was talked about among the MARCO officers after the novices were given phone privileges - only the time and lack of a net control station held it up. Don Mallinson, K2TNY volunteered to function as net control, and the time and frequency were selected. The net will be operated on Saturday afternoons at noon on a frequency of 28.350. On this as well as all other MARCO nets, please look at least five kilocycles above and below the listed frequencies for the net, and if you do not hear the net control station, start the net up yourself.

One last addendum to the net schedule is an addition to the arrangements made for the Wednesday evening RTTY net. Net control operator Ira, W3HEF tells us that he will call CQ and try to establish the net on 3.6065, but if his efforts are unsuccessful he will QSY to 14.110 on standard RTTY at fifteen minutes after the hour.

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EARTHQUAKE IN SAN SALVADOR AND AMATEUR RADIO
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by Al Vayhinger, W9ELR

On November 3, 1986 while tuning the twenty meter band, I heard Glenn, K1MAN, of the International Amateur Radio Network, (IARN) on 14.275 mHz talking to a Ham in San Salvador about an earthquake that had occurred there Oct. 10, 1987.

As all of the telephone lines were out of order in San Salvador, it was apparent that a volunteer Ham was needed there to pass emergency traffic and coordinate the activities of volunteer medical personnel that were already in the country.

Immediately Glenn accepted my offer of volunteering to go to San Salvador. Mario, YS1TG, came on the frequency and offered to be my host while I would be in the country.

It was necessary for me to look at a map to determine that San Salvador was the capital of El Salvador, a small country located on the Pacific coast of Central America.

The following Friday, with suitcase in hand and a couple of two meter transceivers, I arrived in San Salvador. Mario had suggested that I use his HF radio at his home.

Meeting me at the airport were Richard, KZ1P and Chester, YS9CHE. Richard was a volunteer from the states and had been there about two weeks operating and repairing a lot of radio and medical equipment. Chester was an American who lives in San Salvador and speaks Spanish fluently.

Chester took all of us 'foreigners' under his wing and kept us out of trouble. Working in a foreign country is very different from working in the USA.

Shortly after my arrival, we began making plans for a team of nine volunteer medical doctors, headed by Dr. Young, K4FSE, to arrive from Columbia, South Carolina. We were in daily contact with either Walt, K4VMG or Bill, WB4UGV in Columbia, South Carolina, making arrangements to get the medical team into the country. Some rather amusing situations occurred before all was in readiness for the team to arrive.

While waiting for the team to arrive from South Carolina, we handled all of the radio traffic for a makeshift field hospital that had been set up by the Salvation Army. There were two volunteer U.S. doctors, that had been sent by the IARN, working in this hospital. Several phone patches were handled to the states in regard to the medical supplies that were urgently needed for the hospital.

About this time it was learned that a small girl had caught her hair in a sugar cane mill and was in need of urgent medical attention in the states. Arrangements were made on the IARN to get her to the States and get medical treatment.

I must stop at this point and acknowledge the tremendous assistance given by the members of the San Salvador Amateur Radio Club. In addition to Mario and Chester, Maggie, YS1ZA, Magda, YS1MBB, Francisco, YS1AZ, another Francisco YS1FB, and many more local amateurs went out of their way to assist in the overall emergency and make the Americans feel at home.

On several weekends the local Hams took the American group to the beach, which was about one hour's drive from the city. We will always remember those beach parties and the great hospitality of the local Ham Club.

After we made several trips to the airport to check on and expidite the arrival of medical supplies, the team from South Carolina finally arrived. They brought with them over one and one-half tons of medical supplies that had been donated for the earthquake relief fund. These supplies were all transported to Chester's to inventory and decide where they were most needed. Chester's wife was very understanding of the large body of supplies on her living-room floor.

Several times U.S. Hams connected me, by phone patch, to my wife in Indiana. You don't know how much this means when one is out of the country.

On my wife's birthday, I talked to a stateside Ham friend, Gordon, N9GDV, who agreed to order flowers to be delivered to my home in Indiana. Gordon did everything right. However, my wife happened to be listening on 14.275 and that spoiled the whole surprise!

Thanksgiving Day was a big day for the American volunteer medical team. The Governor of South Carolina talked by phone patch directly to the members of the team.

I wish to thank everyone who so graciously ran phone patches for the emergency in San Salvador.

Several of the volunteer doctors and members of the local Ham club took money out of their own pockets to purchase drugs at the local pharmacy when emergency situations arose.

Just before I left to return home, I was informed of a one-year old baby that had a congenital heart defect and needed to get to a U.S. hospital. This information was passed on to the IARN and things started happening. Due to swift action by Maggie, Dr. Young and Glenn, the baby was brought to the states, operated on and is now doing very well.

I spent 30 days in San Salvador after the earthquake where over 1500 people were killed, many buildings were destroyed or left leaning at a precarious angle, and many people were forced to live on the sidewalks.

After seeing the volunteer doctors treating children whose parents had literally no money to pay, I was proud to be a small part of amateur radio and able to do something to help, no matter how little.

Try it sometime. You'll like it! As the Salvadorians say, "Una experiencia inolvidable!"

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AN INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP
BEGINS WHEN MARCO MEMBERS
VE3CZL and ZL4PD MEET
(Continued from Page 5)
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and when they arrived in Toronto, my son, who is a pilot, and I picked them up at the Toronto airport and flew them down to the Niagara Peninsula with a tour by air over the Welland Canal, the Niagara river and the Falls, followed by a motor tour and lunch later. We all dined at historic Queenston Heights and then flew Keith and Jean back to Toronto that night.

Prior to Keith leaving New Zealand, he was able to meet Susan in Christchurch and arrange that she be looked after on occasion by his family. As a result, Susan was able to meet Keith's father, several of his children, some by surprise, and her stay in New Zealand was made all the more pleasant and interesting because of it. Keith was able to arrange, through another Ham in Christchurch to have Susan come to his shack and regular skeds were then set up between Susan and St. Catherines and Christchurch for the duration of her stay. Through the kndness of this Ham, Stan, ZL3CV, (not a MARCO member), skeds were arranged in Sidney and in Fiji, where Susan spent two weeks on the return trip.

Regular contacts since have been set up with Keith and with Ted, G3TMN.

The purpose of writing this episode is not just for the interest of the members of MARCO alone, but to show a potential usefullness of MARCO, outside the professional and radio value of the organization. This worked out so well and was so satisfying for all of us that I would urge that we take advantage of this more often and use not only the MARCO Registry but the DX net to arrange visits in these far away places. For my own part, although this area is uninteresting to those of us who have lived here all our lives, we forget that one of the wonders of the world is located only ten miles from my QTH and members in far away countries may only have seen the spectacle in photographs. I also feel that the DX net could be opened up to the South Paciifc and far East area relatively easy by taking advantage of the time and propagation conditions that Keith and I have been able to set up. At the present time we are using 14.135 mHz Sunday at 0300 but this could easily be changed to the MARCO frequency of 14.280 and set up on a weekly basis relatively easily and relatively informally. Those of you who may be interested, please listen in, and interrupt on CW if you are not able to use phone at that frequency. I would especially urge members in Australia, Hawaii and the South Pacific to break in on reading this and although we are not on every week, I will attempt to put out a call for a moment anyway."

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TALKING WITH YOUR FINGERS
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(For the RTTY, AMTOR, and PACKET enthusiasts among the ranks of the MARCO members, we dedicate this column to their best interests. We must however have input from those of you who are using these digital modes. Send your articles, reports, etc., to the MARCO Newlsetter, Box 73's, Acme PA., 15610.)

MARCO packet continues to include new enthusiasts each month. We have a few new calls and their bulletin board stations included in the list at the end of this article.

Gateway, the official ARRL publication for the packet radio group had a nice article in one of its latest issues detailing to the efforts on the part of the MARCO membership in this new mode.

Shortly after the Gateway article hit the press we received a card from a physician in Anchorage who is on HF packet. Another, seeing traffic between the MARCO members in the Philadelphis area, sought information on the organization. Hopefully, they will both soon be members.

For those of you who still are unfamiliar with the mode, personal computers, (largely Commodores, but many others which have a RS 232 port) are linked to either a VHF or an HF radio by a device known as a Terminal Node Controller. With VHF (2 meters or 220 mHz) the message is sent from one area to another utilizing many other packet stations which are operating in the "digi" mode. It is likened to a repeater which all of you are familiar with, except that the "packet" of the message is accepted, then instantaneously transmitted on to the next digi. The beautiful part of packet is that the station receiving the message must acknowledge receipt of it, or the message is transmitted again and again until it is "acked" by the next receiving station. This results in the reception of a 100 % perfect message.

Here's an example of what we refer to. The following message was received from Ed Ludin after he had received and read the message the Rob Staebler had sent a day or two before. (Rob's message is printed on page 3 of this Newsletter.) It is reprinted exactly as received off the packet network.

Msg# Size To From @BBS Date
761 2427 WA3TVG K2UK W2XO 9-20-87

Path:@WB3AFL@:WA7SSO@:AK3P@:W3EAG@:
WB2RVX>@WB2MNF@W2UK

(Following Msg Copied to you.)
Quote:
156 KEOFD @K3PGB K2UK 870919/0055
Robin: received your message re the nets. Glad others are giving the matter thought. There's no doubt that something must be done to try to get freqs that are more easily useable. But, in my opinion, we need to do something to attract more participation. Of course, that brings up the old chicken and question, doesn't it. No doubt, opening nets on 10, 15, 40 and during the morning or other daytime hours would perhaps give us more open freqs and perhaps more member participation. But, who is going to be available to man the nets??? True, if one person undertakes the responsibility, after it's announced in the Newsletter and on other nets, perhaps new net control stations will show up, but past experience does not always bear that out. We've tried CW, RTTY, SLOW-SCAN, Etc., but with minimal success. In my opinion, what works best is an evening net, always (and I repeat - always) started on time every day with a responsible net control, reliably there. There will be some nights with no attendees, but others will be jam-packed. The secret of success is that when a vtoopies also to all MARCO Packeteers.
Best Regards, Ed
WA3TVG, Ed, de W2XO LAN: